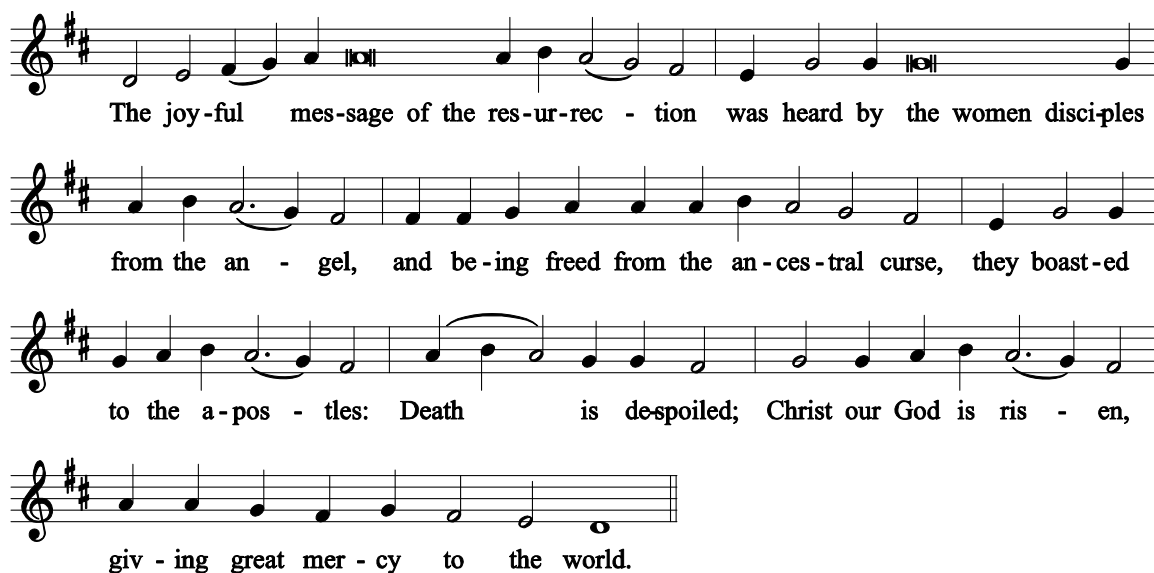


The Tone 4 Troparion melody

The Tone 4 troparion melody is one of the easiest of this family of melodies. Troparia are sung at most of our services.

Here is the Troparion of the Resurrection in Tone 4, sung at the Divine Liturgy.




The joy-ful mes-sage of the res-ur-rec - tion was heard by the women disci-ples
from the an - gel, and be-ing freed from the an - ces - tral curse, they boast - ed
to the a - pos - tles: Death is des-poiled; Christ our God is ris - en,
giv - ing great mer - cy to the world.

The form of the melody

The tone 4 troparion melody has two phrases – A and B – which are sung in alternation, and a concluding phrase.

Here is the basic form of the tone 4 troparion melody, A phrase:



(do re) mi fa so so so la so fa mi

The first two notes are sung ONLY for the first (initial) use of the A phrase; they are not sung when the A phrase is repeated (see the example troparion above).

We call the first part (from *do* up to *so*) the *intonation*. The intonation established the pitch, tonality (scale), and rhythm for the phrase, and the whole hymn. The intonation should be sung smoothly and steadily, in a clear voice.

The next part of the phrase is the *reciting tone* – the part sung (in this case) on the repeated note, *so*. This part of the text is sung as a *recitative*: that is, to the normal rhythm of sung speech, respecting the accents in the text. Normally, the accents will fall at a regular pace.

The last part of the phrase is called the *cadence* – but just *before* the cadence, the congregation needs to know that the phrase is coming to an end. In prostopinije, the cadence usually starts on an accent; and if the cantor is singing an accented (strong) syllable on one pitch, and the congregation on another, it can sound pretty bad.

So in the prostopinije tradition, most melodies have some sort of signal that the cadence is about to start. In the A phrase of the Tone 4 troparion melody, this is done with a *preparatory note*:

(do re) mi fa so so so la so fa mi

The preparatory note is the *la* which introduces the cadence (*so fa mi*, all in half notes). The preparatory note is always unaccented or “weak”; it should be sung lightly (not WEAKLY, but lightly).

In prostopinije, the last syllable almost always gets a note by itself, so to find where the cadence goes, you work backward from the last syllable to find the accent that comes before it. As a result, the cadence might have

Two syllables:

res-ur-rec - tion ′

Three syllables:

the an - ces - tral curse, ′

Four syllables:

Death is de-spoiled; ′

These patterns in the cadence will become very familiar as you study prostopinije – many cadences consist of three long notes, either slurred together or subdivided to match the accents of the text being sung.

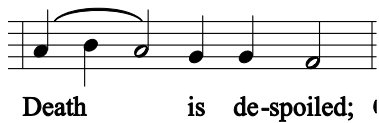
Now go back to the three A phrases in the example troparion. The first one uses the entire A melody:

The joy - ful mes-sage of the res-ur-rec - tion ′

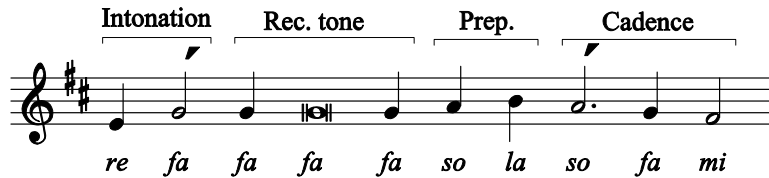
The second A phrase skips the first two notes, and repeats the first note of the intonation so that an accent falls on the reciting tone:

and be - ing freed from the an - ces - tral curse, ′

The text for the last A phrase is SO short that the intonation and skipped, AND the reciting tone, preparatory note, and start of the cadence merge together:



Here is the form of the B phrase, with the parts labeled:

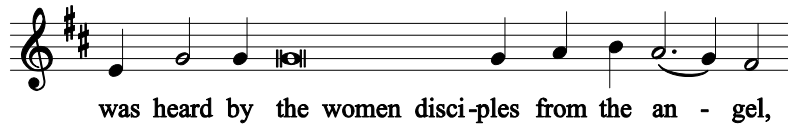


The intonation here isn't stepwise, but by a leap from *re* to *fa*, pausing on an accented long note before continuing.

If the text for the phrase begins with an accent, then the intonation may be skipped:



If the text doesn't begin with an accent, then there may be one or two short notes before the leap:



The reciting tone on *fa* is from the half note onward, ending with TWO preparatory notes (*so la*), and a three-note cadence (*so fa mi*). Here, though, the first note of the cadence is a DOTTED quarter note, meaning it is a little longer than the first note of the A phrase cadence, and the middle note is correspondingly shorter.

The final phrase begins in a reciting tone of *so*, then a long cadence: four quarter notes (beginning with an accent) and three half notes (beginning with an accent)



For example:



im - ploring your Son, Christ our God, to save our souls.

The musical notation consists of a single staff in treble clef with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). The melody starts with a quarter note on G4, followed by a quarter rest, then a quarter note on A4, a quarter note on B4, a quarter note on C5, a quarter note on B4, a quarter note on A4, a quarter note on G4, and ends with a half note on F#4.

If the text phrase is on the short side, then the reciting tone and the cadence will merge, and the first accent in the cadence may not put in an appearance. Look at the last phrase of the example troparion at the start of this handout.

Another example



Your birth, O Christ our God, has shed up - on the world the light of
knowl - edge; for through it, those who wor-shipped the stars have learned from
a star to worship you, the Sun of Jus - tice, and to know you, the Dawn
from on High. Glo - ry to you, O Lord!

The musical notation consists of four staves in treble clef with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). The melody is written in a reciting tone style with a cadence. The text is aligned under the notes, with hyphens indicating syllables that span across notes.